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mHUBChicago.com

RFP: Catalyze Initiative Small Business Development Partner in Product and Manufacturing Innovation

November 18, 2022

Catalyze Initiative Small Business Development Partner in Product and Manufacturing Innovation

mHUB seeks proposals for a technical assistance program partner for Black and Latino physical product based/manufacturing businesses located on the South or West Side of the City in neighborhoods hit hardest by COVID-19.

mHUB is an innovation center and co-working space for HardTech startups, entrepreneurs, manufacturers, investors, and industry leaders.

It is the intent of mHUB to select a partner on the basis of your responses to the enclosed *Request for Proposal* and subsequent interviews on December 28, 2022.

Included in this *Request for Proposal* are the following documents:

- Exhibit A – mHUB Organization Background
- Exhibit B – RFP Schedule of Events
- Exhibit C – General Project Information
- Exhibit D – Proposal Guidelines
- Exhibit E – Scope of Services
- Exhibit F – Budget Template
- Exhibit G – Estimate Project Timeline

Please review the enclosed information and send one (1) electronic copy of your Proposal to team@mHUBChicago.com no later than Friday, December 16th at 11:59 p.m. CDT. We respectfully request your proposal follow the guidelines as outlined in the enclosed documents. Should you have any questions regarding this Request for Proposal, please contact Shannon McGhee at Shannon@mHUBChicago.com or book 30 minutes with her via [this link](#).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shannon McGhee".

Sincerely,
Shannon McGhee
Director of Community Impact and Engagement



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Exhibit A – mHUB Organization Background

About mHUB

mHUB is a leading independent hardtech and manufacturing innovation center that exists to convene the entrepreneurial ecosystem around physical product innovation to ensure that the manufacturing industry continues to accelerate, grow and thrive. The mHUB community includes over 428 active and alumni startups and small businesses supported by a deep talent pool of product designers and developers, entrepreneurs, engineers and manufacturers, corporate leaders, industry experts, mentors and investors. mHUB provides a hyper-resourced environment to entrepreneurs with the goal of commercializing new hardtech innovation that will lead to new businesses, intellectual property, investment, revenue and job creation. Since launching in 2017, the mHUB community has generated more than \$721M in revenue, launched more than 1,398 products, hired more than 3,987 employees, and raised over \$1B in capital. For more information go to www.mHUBchicago.com.

About the mHUB Catalyze Initiative

The Catalyze Initiative is 5-year effort to drive equitable access to manufacturing entrepreneurship for marginalized founders including women, Black founders, and Latino founders. Designed to tackle systemic barriers with multi-pronged solutions, the Catalyze Initiatives includes four programs that tie non-dilutive funding and hands-on support, all in partnership with place-based partners. Programs include the granted community partners program, the mPOWER program for startup founders, the Landis Family Foundation Hardtech Fellowship, and the Innovation Scholarship Fund.



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Exhibit B – RFP Schedule of Events

This Request for Proposal is governed by the following schedule:

Release of RFP	Friday, November 18 th , 2022
Office Hours for Questions	Every Monday, Tuesday and Friday (book here)
Proposals are Due	Friday, December 16 th , 2022
Notifications	Wednesday, December 28 th , 2022



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Exhibit C – General Project Information

Proposed Scope of Work

mHUB seeks a small business support organization partner to deliver technical assistance programming for Black and Latino physical product-based/manufacturing businesses located on the South or West Side of the City in neighborhoods hit hardest by COVID-19. Technical assistance should be geared towards scale-ready businesses with existing revenue and customers, should be structured and cohort-based, and be geared towards accelerating growth and scale.

mHUB will provide the partner with a grant to support expansion of services, as well as access to its proven product development curriculum (digital and in-person workshops), network of mentors, engineering talent for product development and process improvement, prototyping labs, and dedicated staff to support program design and delivery.

Partner Requirements

- **Location:** The partner must be place-based, with operations in and ability to serve Black and Latino business owners based in communities hit hardest by COVID-19 (click here for a list of target communities)
- **Track record:** The partner must have a history of delivering successful programming to accelerate business growth, including strong outcomes in revenue and workforce increases of its participants.
- **Programming:** mHUB is looking to collaborate on a structured 6-8 month program, pairing its strength in product/business development with a partner's focus and strength in business development.

Available mHUB Resources

mHUB will provide the following resources to support the partner and program participants.

- Dedicated program contact
- Full access to mHUB resources for partner and program participants, including:
 - o Access to mHUB's full curriculum via its soon-to-be-launched learning management system
 - o Access to mHUB's industry network of investors and corporate partners
 - o Access for partner and program participants to prototyping labs and equipment
- \$5,000 in microgrants for program participants to support business and product development costs
- Access to innovation teams to support product and/or process development



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Estimated Project Cost

1. With generous support from partners, mHUB is able to provide up to \$100,000 to the partner for one-year of programming with the possibility to continuing the partnership for a second year at the same level.

Exhibit D – Proposal Guidelines

Partner's proposal shall, at a minimum, include the following points of information:

1. Brief overview of your organization's history and impact on small businesses, and particularly small businesses in the physical product and manufacturing spaces.
2. Include key team members of the organization involved in this project and include information on background and responsibility.
3. Identify no more than 3 similar project experiences in working with partners to deploy small business development programming over the past 5 years.
4. Provide a narrative for the proposed project including project description, expected outcomes, key performance indicators and approach to measurement.
5. Include a budget ([leveraging this template](#)) for project expenses.



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Exhibit E – Scope of Services

The partner's proposal shall include, as a minimum, the following Scope of Services. The following scope items are intended to clarify, but not limit, the services proposed in response to this *Request for Proposal*.

Program Overview

Program description; expected outcomes including business growth (revenue, employees, capital, demographics of participants, and other indicators; and key performance indicators.

Recruitment

Approach to recruitment of program participants, focusing on history and track record of recruiting in the past.

Technical Assistance for Businesses

Describe approach to technical assistance and specific resources provided to business owners. Include approach to measurement and metrics of success before, during, and after program delivery.

Program Timeline

Describe program length and any critical milestones.

Additionally, **mHUB is able to offer the following resources to support the partner and program participants.**

Compensation

mHUB will pay the partner with up to \$100,000 in compensation for program administration within the scope proposed by selected partner.

Digital Curriculum Content

Partner and program participants will have full access to mHUB resources, including its soon-to-be launched digital curriculum to support program design. The digital curriculum will include mHUB's core curriculum of 55 courses, geared towards customer discovery, business viability and product feasibility.

Access to Prototyping Lab and Innovation Facility

Partner and program participants will have access to full mHUB resources, including its 63,000 sq. ft. facility, prototyping labs with \$6 million in prototyping equipment, full suite of technical training on lab equipment, mentor network, member community, co-working space, supplier network and manufacturing connections, and industry partners.



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Microgrants for Participants to Underwrite Innovation Services

In addition to compensation for the partner, mHUB will also provide up to \$50,000 to underwrite innovation services for program participants. This could include any business or product development cost from external services to support scale.

Access to Talent

mHUB will provide program participants with connections to service providers in product development and process improvement.



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Exhibit F – Program Budget

Include a budget for proposed program. Please use [this linked budget template](#), which includes:

- Personnel
- Fringe benefits
- Travel
- Equipment
- Supplies
- Contractual
- Other costs
- Indirect cost



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Exhibit G – Estimated Project Timeline

Partnership kickoff	–	January, 2023
Recruitment begins	–	February, 2023
Program delivery	–	March, 2023 – August or September, 2023
Program evaluation and reporting	–	October/November, 2023